



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

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FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENTS SENTENCED

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that United States District Judge Kathleen Cardone has sentenced Ignacio Ramos and Jose Alonso Compean to 132 months and 144 months in federal prison, respectively, on charges associated with a February 2005 shooting incident at the Fabens Point of Entry. On March 8th, 2006, an El Paso, Texas, jury convicted the former U.S. Border Patrol agents of assault with serious bodily injury, assault with a deadly weapon, discharge of a firearm in relation to a crime of violence and a civil rights charge. They were also convicted of four counts and two counts, respectively, of obstruction of justice. The jury acquitted both defendants of assault with intent to commit murder.

"Federal agents who protect our border deserve our respect, gratitude and trust - it is a difficult and dangerous job. But when law enforcement officers use their badge as a shield for carrying out crimes and then engage in a cover up, we cannot look the other way. Agents Compean and Ramos shot an unarmed, fleeing suspect in the back and lied about it," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton.

In early 2005, the defendants shot at an unarmed Mexican National, who was transporting a load of marijuana, while he was running away from them and attempting to flee back into Mexico. During the incident, Compean fired approximately 14 rounds from his service pistol; Ramos fired one round from his service pistol striking the unarmed suspect. Ballistics testing confirmed that the bullet which struck the suspect was from Ramos' service weapon. In addition, jurors found that the defendants intentionally failed to report the shooting incident to supervisors, concealed evidence and obstructed the investigation. Finally, jurors convicted Compean of collecting and disposing the spent shell casings expelled from the defendants' firearms in an effort to prevent them from being used in official proceedings.

Richard L. Skinner, Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, said, "The men and women of the Border Patrol have one of the most difficult and dangerous jobs in federal law enforcement. They serve as the first line of defense for our nation's borders and work to protect our national security. Each day, Border Patrol agents are called upon to apprehend undocumented aliens, interdict dangerous drug traffickers and human smugglers, and provide aid and assistance to those in grave physical danger. Border Patrol agents are trained to respect and protect the civil rights and liberties of those they encounter. Many agents have lost their lives trying to protect the lives of others. In being given the lawful authority to use deadly force when warranted, these agents were bestowed with the highest level of trust. In committing the acts for which they were today sentenced, these two agents have betrayed the trust placed in them by the Department of Homeland Security, their fellow agents, and the public. I again commend the United States Attorney's Office for their successful prosecution of this important case. The Office of Inspector General will remain committed to aggressively investigating allegations of serious civil rights abuses to protect the integrity of the department and the trust placed in our law enforcement officers."

This case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General and was prosecuted for the government by Assistant United States Attorneys Debra P. Kanof and Jose Luis Gonzalez.

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